



1201 16th St., N.W. | Washington, DC 20036 | Phone: (202) 833-4000

Lily Eskelsen García
President

Rebecca S. Pringle
Vice President

Princess R. Moss
Secretary-Treasurer

John C. Stocks
Executive Director

March 25, 2015

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the more than three million members of the National Education Association (NEA), and the students they serve, we would like to express our strong opposition to the FY 2016 budget resolution (H. Con. Res. 27) being brought to the House floor this week, and our support for some of the alternative budgets that have been proposed. The budget should reflect the priorities of our nation and should especially meet the needs of our children and their education. Actions on this issue may be included in the NEA Legislative Report Card for the 114th Congress.

In addition to urging a NO vote on H. Con. Res. 27, we urge you to:

- Vote YES on the Democratic substitute budget offered by Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD). This budget sets the right priorities for the nation: rejects the sequester caps to make needed investments that create jobs for those still seeking work, that educate our children and prepare them for success, and that sharpen the nation's competitive edge; would extend Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for 4 years; calls for tax fairness to generate needed revenue; urges reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools act; and, implements policies that will help create more broadly shared prosperity.
- Vote YES on the budget presented by the Congressional Progressive Caucus offered by Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ). This budget would establish funding levels to allow for investments in key programs like education, repeals the excise tax that threatens quality and affordable health care coverage for educators and their families, and create 8.4 million jobs while also reducing the deficit.
- Vote YES on the budget presented by the Congressional Black Caucus offered by Rep. G.K. Butterfield (D-NC). This budget would invest in education, educator jobs, job training, school modernization, infrastructure, and transportation while protecting programs that help those most in need without cutting Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid or SNAP.
- Vote NO on the budget presented by the Republican Study Committee offered by Rep. Bill Flores (R-TX). This budget goes beyond the Budget Committee proposal in terms of balancing the budget on the backs of those least able to afford it by cutting spending \$7 trillion over the next 10 years, while also repealing the Affordable Care Act.
- Vote NO on the substitute budget offered by Rep. Tom Price (R-GA). This budget would go even further than the FY16 resolution the Budget Committee passed by increasing defense spending by \$2 billion while continuing to cut deeply to NDD programs.

We strongly oppose H. Con. Res. 27 because it takes us in the wrong direction as a nation, see NEA's chart on the effects these cuts could have: [Impact of the House Budget Resolution on U.S. Department of Education Discretionary Funding](#). Specifically, we oppose:

- Doubling down on deep cuts to education and other domestic programs. This proposal would cut Non-Defense-Discretionary programs (i.e. education, health care, job training, etc.), which are already at historically low levels, by \$759 billion over the next decade – this would force even deeper cuts to crucial investments like education depriving students of the opportunity they all deserve for a quality education.
- Freezing Pell Grant awards for the next 10 years when Congress should be trying to help make college more affordable for more students. This budget would eliminate multiple education programs.
- Slashing Medicaid and other health programs, which provides healthcare for one-third of our nation's children, by turning it into a block grant program. The Price proposal cuts Medicaid and other health programs by \$913 billion over ten years, increasing costs for states resulting in fewer funds available for investments in education and other vital programs. Every day, NEA members see firsthand the link between access to healthcare and children's success in school. Students struggle to learn if they do not come to school healthy. Further, this cut will shift costs to the states resulting in fewer funds being available for education and other vital programs.
- Slashing SNAP funding by turning it into a block grant program — leaving states with the tough decision of determining who will no longer receive assistance. Educators know first-hand that hungry children struggle to learn and that access to an adequate and healthy diet is essential to academic success. The clear link between good nutrition and learning is evident in schools across the nation every day.
- Repealing the Affordable Care Act which would be devastating to the millions of children and their families who would lose healthcare. A repeal of ACA would create fear from being denied coverage because of a pre-existing condition and the right for parents to continue to cover their children on their health policies until age 26.
- Voucherizing Medicare and shifting costs to seniors. Under the proposed plan, seniors would receive “premium support”—fixed payments to help buy coverage, which would likely fail to keep pace with rising healthcare costs. The plan also could also lead to the gradual demise of traditional Medicare by making the pool of beneficiaries smaller, older, and sicker—and increasingly costly to cover.

We urge you Vote No on H. Con. Res. 27, which endangers our economic recovery and also restrains future economic growth by depriving the nation of key investments in rebuilding our infrastructure and supporting high-value research and development, in addition to education. We look forward to working with members of Congress to advance policies that give all families a fair shot at reaching the American dream.

Sincerely,



Mary Kusler
Director, Government Relations